

1608/5085

A B R I E F
S C H E M E
O F
Parochial Government,
O R A
M E T H O D of Promoting
the Welfare of a Single
P A R I S H.
Particularly in the C O U N T R E Y;
And thereby of
The P U B L I C K G O O D.
In several short PROPOSALS OF REQUESTS.

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in Northamptonshire.

L O N D O N:

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ERRATA.

A Point of Admiration to be added, p. 6. l. last. An t to be added to Praye, p. 9. Ar for at, p. 10. l. 2. Cannons, Cannon for Canon, p. 10, 11. P. 21 for p. 12. t wanting, p. 12. l. 10. ts wanting, p. 13. l. 27. Grow for grown, condusive with f for c, p. 16. Care for Cure, p. 17. Fenton for Penton, p. 17, 23. l. last. More for those, p. 24. l. 20. Reason for Reasons, p. 25. l. 4.



T O
All Sincere LOVERS of their
NATIVE COUNTRY,

A N D
Of its True INTERESTS ,
However Dignified or Distinguished ;

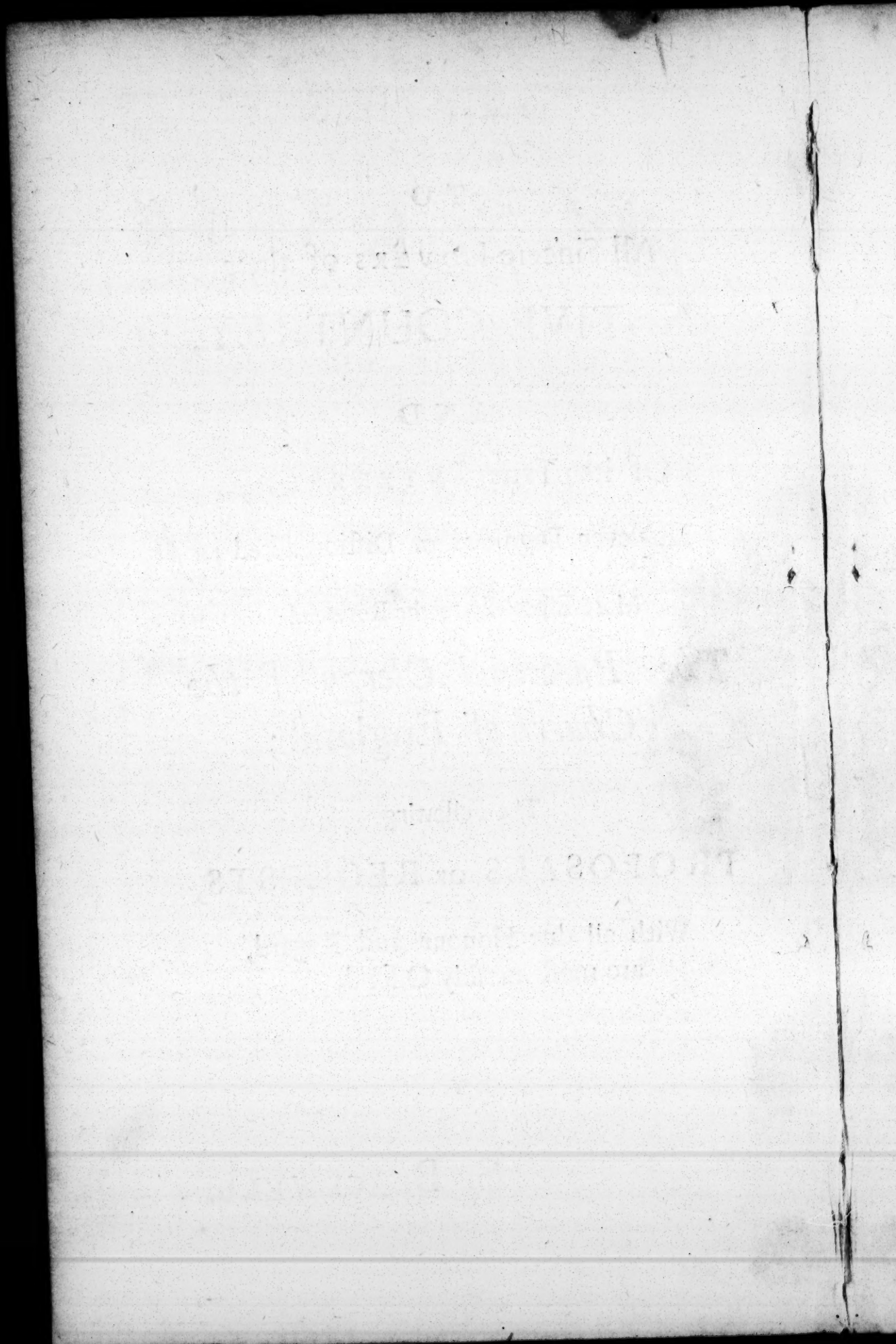
More Especially to the Reverend
*The Parochial Clergy of the
Church of England ;*

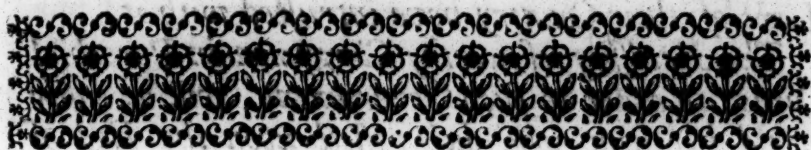
The Following
PROPOSALS or REQUESTS,

With all due Honour and Regard,
are most humbly Offer'd,

B Y

S. BLACKWELL.





A BRIEF
 S C H E M E
 O F
 PAROCHIAL GOVERNMENT.

The P R E F A C E.

HOW much depends upon the Settlement of good Government in particular Parishes, which make up the great Body of a Nation, is very evident to such as consider the visible Advantages they among whom it is settled, enjoy by it, and the Inconveniences others suffer by the Want of it ; which are too numerous and too important, not to touch them very sensibly , who look about with Concern for the publick Good. It will not therefore, it is hoped , be thought improper for a private Clergyman to offer his Thoughts in way of Proposal, or rather of humble Request, upon this useful and necessary Subject, while he keeps within proper Bounds ; and leaves that which may require
 Autho-

Authority to effect it, to those whom God and the Laws of their Country have intrusted with it.

The Necessity of worthy Clergymen in Parochial Cures, in order to such Government, will be easily own'd by them, who duly reflect upon the End of the Ministry, which is to teach and promote true Religion, the great Interest of Men and Christians; whether as singly consider'd, or in Society; and how much that justly influences all Affairs.

The P R O P O S A L S.

I. **T**HE First Proposal or rather Request is, That in Order to have such Clergymen as may be Blessings to the Parishes, and Times they live in, all Sorts of Persons will frequently and earnestly address themselves to God by Prayer for his Blessing upon them that are to ordain Ministers, and upon them who are to be ordained by them. More particularly, that the *Ember Days* at the Four Seasons for Ordination, may be more strictly and religiously observed, both in publick and private, by all that would be accounted sincere Members of the Church of *England*; especially in praying earnestly, as our Church hath excellently taught us, in the first of the Prayers to be used on those Days, for them that are to be admitted into Holy Orders; That 'Almighty God, 'who hath purchased to himself an universal 'Church, by the precious Blood of his Dear Son, 'will mercifully look upon the same, and at that 'Time so guide and govern the Minds of his Servants the Bishops and Pastors of his Flock, that 'they may lay Hands suddenly on no Man; but 'faithfully and wisely make choice of fit Persons

to



‘to serve in the sacred Ministry of his Church:
‘and that to those which shall be ordained to any
‘Holy Function, he will give his Grace and Hea-
‘venly Benediction, that both by their Life and
‘Doctrine they may set forth his Glory, and set
‘forward the Salvation of all Men, through Jesus
‘Christ our Lord.’ Thus to pray, is to do that
which our Lord hath plainly requir’d, *St. Matth.*
9. 38. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the Har-
vest, that he will send forth Labourers into his
Harvest. Thus our Lord, who well knew what
need his Church, in all succeeding Times, would
have of skilful and faithful Ministers; and how
necessary Prayer is towards obtaining this great
Blessing.

PROPOSAL II.

THAT, because great is the Power and In-
fluence of the Patrons of Churches, we
do not forget to pray earnestly for them. Nor
must they who are more especially concern’d,
neglect, in the most prudent Methods of Address,
to apply themselves to them, that they may be
prevailed with, considering the honourable Trust
which is committed to them, and the Account
they must expect to give of it another Day, to
bestow their Livings in such manner, that the
End of the Ministry, and the just Expectation of
the Church, may be answer’d; that the Bishops
may be glad to institute them, who are presented
to them, and to cause them to be inducted; and
that the Parishioners may rejoice to receive them,
and find Reason to praise God for the Advantages
of their Ministry to all Eternity.

PROPOSAL III.

THAT constant Personal Residence of all Rectors, Vicars, and other Ministers settled in Parochial Cures, be carefully endeavoured, as it is really much to be desired. For by this Means the Occasions of the Parish, upon sudden Emergencies, will be best served; Error and Wickedness may be best discovered, opposed, and restrained; True Faith and suitable Practice, all manner of Goodness, may be best favour'd and promoted; the great Objection against the Church, that is, Want of Discipline, may be happily silenced; and occasion may be cut off from them that seek Occasion to complain, and to speak reproachfully of the Neglect of Publick Buildings, of Charity, and in general, of the Cure of Souls: Which last cannot but work effectually upon those, who have seriously consider'd, what that great Expression, *Heb. 13. 17. Watching for Souls, as they that must give an Account*, really imports.

If it be objected, That there are Cases, in which the Absence of Parochial Ministers is either necessary, or at least allow'd by Law: The Answer must be, That in such Cases, Curates, every way sufficient for Learning, Life, Prudence, Industry, such, in short, as the Bishop of the Diocese shall approve of, may reasonably be expected by the Parishioners; and ought to be provided and settled by the Rector, Vicar, or Chief Minister; and competent Maintenance, proportionable to the Value of the Living, ought to be settled on them.

Nor can Pluralities, and the Non-Residence that attends them, upon other Terms, except in some rare Cases, be tolerably justified. PRO-

PROPOSAL IV.

THAT a good Understanding be secured between the Patron of the Church, the chief Gentleman, or Gentlemen of the Parish, and the Rector, Vicar, or Minister.

This must be endeavoured by prudent Behaviour, agreeable Respects, just and equitable Dealing, and proper Condescension, as there shall be Occasion.

The Ladies also, the Honourable, Devout and Wise Women, must, by all proper Addresses, be engaged in this worthy Design, of good Parochial Government: For great will their Influence be upon their Husbands, Children, Families, Neighbours, to the best of Purposes.

PROPOSAL V.

THAT Honest, Knowing, Virtuous, Active Men, as often, and as far as it may be, upon all Opportunities, be chosen into the Parish-Offices of Constables, Church-Wardens, and Overseers of the Poor; to be frequently discours'd with, and always countenanced in all their legal Actings towards the Suppression of Vice, and the Encouragement of Virtue, orderly and regular Living, by the said Patron, Rector, and others.

PROPOSAL VI.

THAT Admonishing and Reproving, as there shall be Occasion, in the Method our Lord hath required and directed, *St. Matth. 18. 15, 16, 17.* be used by all Sorts of serious, prudent

6 Parochial Government.

dent Persons; but especially by such as are in Authority, and more especially by the Minister of the Parish; who, when he was ordained, promised to use both publick and private Monitions and Exhortations, as well to the Sick, as to the Whole, within his Cure, as Need shall require, and Occasion shall be given. *See the Form and Manner of ordering of Priests.*

PROPOSAL VII.

THAT Care be taken to promote such a charitable Temper of Mind, as will make them, who shall be happy in it, delight in doing good; whether in respect to the Estates, or Bodies, or those exceedingly best of Interests, the Souls of their Neighbours, according to the Talents or Abilities God hath given them.

This happy Temper, probably, will be much advanced, by frequently inculcating and pressing the great Examples of our God and Saviour, of the Holy Apostles, and of those Primitive Christians, whose Charity, as an Ancient * Father tells us, was the Admiration of their Enemies. Nor must we forget those, whom later Times have produced, or such as burn and shine in the present Age: May the Zeal of their Piety and Charity provoke very many. How influential will the good Example of but one Leading Person in any Parish be towards prevailing with others, by imitating him or her, to glorify our Father which is in Heaven.

* Tertull.
Apol. c. 39.

PROPOSAL VIII.

TO endeavour the Erecting of Charity-Schools, after the Example of the Great and Illustriously Charitable Cities of *London* and *Westminster*, the Two Universities of *England*, and the chief Cities and Towns of the same.

This will be a good Proof of charitable Minds, and much tend to the Advantage of a Parish, especially if considerably large and populous.

Towards bringing on this good Work, a Treatise, called, *Methods used for Erecting Charity-Schools, with the Rules and Orders by which they are governed*, will be very useful, as affording proper Directions, and the Encouragement of Variety of Examples, with Two Catalogues of Books; one, of such as are fit for the Masters of such Schools; the other, of such as are proper for the Scholars. 'Tis commonly printed after the Sermons at the Anniversary Meeting of the Children educated in the Charity-Schools in and about the Cities of *London* and *Westminster*. The Sixteenth Edition, with Additions, came out in the Year 1717; being printed and sold by Mr. *Downing*.

The IXth PROPOSAL, or humble Request is,

THAT the Publick Service may be constantly officiated in the Parish-Church Morning and Evening, if it may be, every Day.

So we shall unite in a daily general Confession of such sinning, as all are and have been guilty of; and in constant Prayer for the Pardon of it; and for the Assistance of that Divine Grace, which we

must all own a continual Need of. So we shall daily join in a Profession of our common Faith, in hearing the joyful Sound of that Word, of that Holy Scripture, which we are all concern'd in, which is the Charter of all our Christian Privileges. So, in short, God who daily loads us with publick Benefits, will be daily acknowledged and praised in publick ; and they who are united in partaking of his Mercies, will daily, twice each Day, join together in the Acknowledgment of them ; and this where they may hope to be excited and warm'd by the Example of other devout Christians, and to be assisted by their agreeing Prayers and Praises.

Nor must this be look'd upon, as the Proposal of an Innovation : For it is agreeable to the Example of His Majesty's Chapel Royal, of all the Cathedrals, and of all the Colleges in the Two Universities, of many of the Nobility, and of several Parochial Churches, especially in the City of London. See in *the Case of Impropriations, and Augmentation of Vicarages*, by the Learned Dr. White Kennet, the present Dean of *Peterborough*, p. 293, 294, 295. the Conditions on which the Right Reverend, Learned and Charitable Dr. Morley, late Bishop of *Winchester*, augmented the Vicarages of *Farnham* and *Horswell* in *Surrey*. Of the Articles of the Archbishop of *Canterbury* [*Sancroft*] recommended to all the Bishops within his Metropolitcal Jurisdiction, the 16th of July, 1688. the Fifth is, ' That they [the ' Clergy] perform the daily Office publickly ' (with all Decency, Affection and Gravity) in ' all Market, and other great Towns, and even in ' Villages and less populous Places ; bring People ' to

‘ to publick Prayers as frequently as may be,
‘ especially on such Days, and at such Times, as
‘ the Rubricks and Canons appointed, &c.

Since the transcribing of these Papers, I have met with a Discourse concerning *the daily frequenting the Common Prayer*: By Thomas Comber, D. D. and Prebendary of *York*, afterwards Dean of *Durham*; and well known by those Works, with which he has greatly served the Church of *England*. This Discourse was printed at *London*, 8vo. 1687. and will reward the serious Reader.

Besides the Recommendation of many and great Examples, it must be added, That such officiating of the Publick Service is that which our Church enjoins, as is evident from the Discourse concerning the Service of the Church before our Liturgy; at the End of which it is added, ‘ That
‘ all Priests and Deacons are to say daily the
‘ Morning and Evening Prayer, either privately or
‘ openly, not being let by Sickness, or some other
‘ urgent Cause; and the Curate that ministrereth in
‘ every Parish-Church or Chapel, being at home,
‘ and not otherwise reasonably hindred, shall say
‘ the same in the Parish Church or Chapel where
‘ he ministrereth; and shall cause a Bell to be
‘ tolled thereunto, a convenient Time before he
‘ begin, that the People may come to hear God’s
‘ Word, and pray with him.

These Two Rules, Rubricks, or Orders, are exactly recited by the excellently Learned and Pious Bishop *Beveridge*, in his Discourse of *the great Necessity and Advantage of Publick Prayer*: To which I refer them, who desire further Satisfaction; as also to the very instructive Preface before it, which tells us, That the Pious Author confirm’d by his Practice, what he establish’d by his

his Preaching: And that he left the Main of his Estate, at his Decease, for the Propagation of the Gospel, and promoting of Christian Knowledge, in the manner before-recited at Home, as well as Abroad.

To the Curacy of *Mount-Sorrell* in particular, and Vicarage of *Barrow* in the County of *Leiceſter*, in a thankful Remembrance of God's Mercies vouchsafed to him thereabouts, he bequeaths a plentiful Accession for ever, on Condition that Prayers be read Morning and Evening every Day, according to the Liturgy of the Church of *England*, in the Chapel and Parish-Church aforesaid, &c.

But taking it for granted, that so great and good a Work cannot be accomplish'd on the sudden; my farther Proposal and humble Request is, That while we use our best Endeavours towards it, the publick Service may be constantly read in the Parish Church, at least on *Wednesdays* and

Fridays, and on Holy-Days and their

See Cannons

14, 15.

Eves; on the *Ember* Days, and other

Fasts: And that this may be done

with such Life and Zeal, and exem-

plary Reverence, as may affect and encourage them that hear it. And that a Congregation may, as far as is possible, be secured, 'tis further proposed, That the Parishioners may be often minded of their Duty of addressing themselves to God by publick Prayers; and earnestly exhorted to frequent them; and that the Children of Charity and other Schools in the Parish, with their Master or Mistress, may be obliged to attend them in due Manner; care being taken to work an awful Sense of God, his Service, his House, in all those who appear before him there. This Sense of God must

must be made to appear by a constant, wakeful, fix'd Attention; by Hands and Eyes lifted up towards Heaven, by the Direction of serious Minds; by suitable Answers; an audible *Amen*, and by the humble Posture of Kneeling and Adoration, used under the Old Testament by the Greatest of Kings; under the Gospel Dispensation by our Blessed Lord; and particularly by his Apostle St. Paul, who bowed his Knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is agreeable to those well known Precepts, *Pf. 95. 6. O come let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker*; and *1 Cor. 6. 20. Ye are bought with a Price: Therefore glorify God in your Body, and in your Spirit, which are God's*.

See Cannon
18.

P R O P O S A L X.

THAT the Exercise of Fasting, which seems at present, at least in some Places, greatly neglected, may be renew'd and joined with Prayer. That it is a Duty of the Gospel, our Lord's Words, St. *Matth. 6. 16, 17. When ye fast, and when thou fastest*, suppose: Those in the 2d of St. *Mark* at the 20th are very plain, — *The Days will come, when the Bridegroom shall be taken from them, then shall they fast in those Days*: whether thereby we understand the Times of the Gospel, or the Time more immediately before our Lord's Death.

That after our Lord's Ascension, Fasting was in use amongst his Disciples, we learn from *Acts 13. 2, 3*. Part of St. Paul's Account of himself was, *2 Cor. 11. 27. That he was in Fastings often*. The Account he gives of himself in *1 Cor. 9. 27.*
must

must not be forgotten ; *I keep under my Body, and bring it into Subjection* : The Reason of it is such, as may make even a Saint tremble, *lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away*. It must be granted, that as there are different Constitutions, States of Health, and Conditions of Life, so all are not equally capable of exercising Fasting in the same Manner ; God, no doubt, will have mercy, where his Sacrifice cannot be offer'd ; and accept of less, where more cannot be given.

That Fasting is a Duty we are obliged to perform, when no sufficient Objection can be made against it, 'tis evident enough. What the Seasons are in which it is to be performed ordinarily, the Appointments of our Church teach us ; extraordinary Occasions of it, we must learn from the special Providence of God in his Dealings with us, or with our Relations, or with our Countrey, and from the Directions of Authority.

The Table of the *Vigils*, Fasts, and Days of Abstinence to be observed in the Year, according to the Appointment of the Church, needs no Comment. As to Weekly Fasts, all the *Fridays* in the Year, except *Christmas Day*, are to be weekly observed. And how happy would it be, if among Persons of Health and Leisure it might be so ! Hereby Persons of Estates and plentiful Condition, would be habituated to Temperance and Sobriety, and to the ancient frugal Way of Living ; hereby they would be the better enabled to provide suitably for them that depend upon them ; to perform Acts of Charity, and to be hospitable upon good Occasions. Besides, hereby we shall be the better enabled to conquer Temptations ; to abstain from those fleshly Lusts, of what
Kind

Kind foever, *which war against the Soul.* Hereby Time will be redeemed for the best of Purposes, for Retirement and Meditation; for Acts of Repentance and Holy Resolution; and for fervent Prayer; towards which, Fasting will be a great Help; the Soul being then fittest to mount towards Heaven, when it is least burdened by the Body. *Take heed to your selves,* says our Saviour, St. Luke 21. 34. *lest at any time your Hearts be overcharged with Surfeiting and Drunkenness,* in the Original, *μήποτε ἐσθυσήτε ὑμῶν αἱ καρδίαι,* lest your Hearts be pressed down, as with a Weight; that is, with the Load that Intemperance will lay upon them; and which Fasting will keep off, or happily remove.

P R O P O S A L XI.

THAT a Religious Observation of the Lord's Day, commonly called *Sunday*, both in Publick and Private, may by all proper Means be more and more encouraged. The supplying of Children and Servants with Books of Common-Prayer, to be had at easy Rates, will be very proper to promote serving God regularly in Publick.

The *Christian Scholar* in Rules and Directions for Children sent to *English* Schools, &c. where are particular Directions for going to Church, and for decent and pious Behaviour there; very proper to be recommended to, and to be bestowed on such.

Towards the private Observation of the Lord's Day, furnishing the poorer People with that best of Books the Bible, and with some others which are well known and approved of; such as, *The Whole Duty of Man*; *The Principles of the Christian*

stian Religion, by Dr. Mapletost; *The Christian Institutes*, by the Present Bishop of Chester; *An Abridgment of the History of the Bible*; *The Christian Monitor*; *The Guide of a Christian*; *The Word of God the best Guide*, will much conduce.

In way of Motive, let me observe, That as it is a great Advantage to begin a Day well; when we are awake, to be still with God by Prayers and Praises, and Holy Thoughts: So also to begin the Week well, by a Religious Observation of the First Day of it; for thereby an Impression will be made upon pious Minds, which will probably remain upon them, till it be strengthened by a Return of the same Day, and by many Returns of it, till at length we attain that Blessed Rest, which will never be disturbed; the Rest that remains to the People of God in Heaven.

P R O P O S A L XII.

THAT as judicious prudent Preaching must be of great Use, towards promoting the Welfare of all Sorts of Persons and Places, so that a more than ordinary Care may be taken about it. Nor is it to be thought, but that all faithful Ministers, who have duly consider'd the Obligations they are under, and the Account they must give, will study to shew themselves approved in this Part of their Office.

They will consider that excellent Discourse, which the Church requires the Bishop to make use of at the Ordination of Priests, and will direct themselves by that, and by the Questions that follow, and by the Answers which they themselves have made to them: As also by the 45th of the Constitutions and Canons Ecclesiastical of the

the Year 1603 ; where every beneficed Man, &c. is required to preach one Sermon every *Sunday* of the Year, wherein he shall soberly and sincerely divide the Word of Truth, to the Glory of God, and to the best Edification of his Hearers. Nor must this Canon be understood to discourage Sermons in the Afternoon ; while Catechizing, which lays the Foundation, and is the best Way of keeping us steady on it, is not neglected.

But as the Success of Preaching, under the Blessing of God Almighty and the Co-operation of his Holy Spirit, greatly depends on the Manner of Hearing, and receiving the Word preached ; so the utmost Care must be taken to promote Hearing with such Composure, Seriousness, and Reverence, as become the Word whereby we shall be judged at the Last Day, and which is able to save our Souls.

Nor will the Work be difficult, if Persons of Quality, and more eminent Condition, whose Examples direct and command others ; and Persons of Superior Relation, as Parents, Masters, and Mistresses, will afford their Assistance ; by letting it be seen in that which they do, what others ought to practise.

P R O P O S A L XIII.

THAT constant Catechizing in the Church be diligently used, as the 59th of the before-mentioned Canons, and the Rubrick after the Church Catechism, require ; to which Children, Servants, Prentices, are, and must be obliged, to resort. Towards this, the Charity Schools will be very serviceable ; as also the Distribution of Catechisms, where they are needed, and will be ac-

cepted, with proper Expositions for the Use of Parents, Masters, and their Families. Such are those of the Present Archbishop of *Canterbury* ; of Bishop *Beveridge*, Dr. *Marshal*, not long since Dean of *Gloucester* ; Dr. *Isbam*, Mr. *Lewis*, and of several other worthy Prelates and Clergymen.

As by Preaching, Christ's Sheep grow Christians ; so by catechising his Lambs, Children, the young and tender of his Flock, are and ought to be fed, and certainly will be, by all those Ministers, who desire to give good Proof of their Love to the Redeemer of Souls, our Blessed Lord and Saviour.

P R O P O S A L XIV.

THE Confirmation of Persons, who have been baptized in their Infancy, and are come to Years of Discretion ; which will be greatly Condufive towards that true Piety, which will make particular Persons, Families, Parishes, and even Churches and Kingdoms happy.

'Tis of such Value, and is counted so necessary in the Church of *England*, that in the Rubrick after the Order of Confirmation, it is declared, That none shall be admitted to the Holy Communion, until such Time as he is Confirmed, or be ready and desirous to be Confirmed.

Besides, there are Two Canons, the 60th and 61st, of those already mentioned ; in the former of which it is asserted, ' That it hath been a Solemn, Ancient, and Laudable Custom in the Church of God, continued from the Apostles Time, that all Bishops should lay their Hands upon Children Baptized, and instructed in the Catechism of Christian Religion, praying over them

‘ them, and blessing them: Which, ’tis added,
‘ we commonly call Confirmation; and the Con-
‘ tinuance of it is strictly enjoyn’d.

In the other Canon, every Minister that hath Care and Charge of Souls, is directed and required to take such especial Care, that none may be presented for him to lay his Hand upon, but such as can render an Account of their Faith, according to the Catechism in the Book of Common-Prayer: And further, That when the Bishop shall assign any Time for the Performance of that Part of his Duty, every such Minister shall use his best Endeavour to prepare and make able, and likewise to procure as many as he can, to be then brought, and by the Bishop to be confirmed.

Nor will Parents, or their Children, be averse from this Course, if they shall seriously consider (as it is hoped they will) the Preface which the Bishop is enjoyn’d to read before Confirmation; wherein it is affirmed, ‘ That the Order before-
‘ mentioned is very convenient, to the End that
‘ Children being now come to Years of Discretion,
‘ and having learned what their Godfathers and
‘ Godmothers promised for them in Baptism, they
‘ may themselves with their own Mouth, con-
‘ sent openly before the Church, ratify and con-
‘ firm the same; and also promise, that by the
‘ Grace of God, they will evermore endeavour
‘ themselves faithfully to observe such Things, as
‘ they by their own Confession have assented unto.
For nothing can be more reasonable than such an Engagement; nothing more fit to be undertaken by those, who hope to receive Advantage by their Baptism; whereby they enter’d into Covenant with God, and became Debtors to the whole Gospel; as they who were circumcised *Gal. 5. 3.*
became Debtors to do the whole Law;

that

18 *Parochial Government.*

that is, were obliged to obey it, or to suffer upon Neglect of Obedience, or of Repentance upon Violation of it.

PROPOSAL XV.

Frequent administering and receiving the Holy Sacrament of our Lord's Supper; which after Confirmation, and Arrival at the Age at which the Canon requires it, the Youth of the Parish must be encouraged, and press'd to partake of; having asked and received the Direction and Approbation of their Spiritual Guides.

The exemplary Frequency of Superiors, of Landlords, Parents, Masters, Mistresses, and of principal Neighbours, will be very helpful towards carrying on this excellent Work.

But because the Sacrament of our Lord's Supper, which is capable of affording the greatest Advantages, cannot be effectual either to Old or Young, unless they be prepared for it; sincere Care must be taken to prepare our selves; and that they who belong to us, and more especially young People, who have not yet been at the Lord's Table, may receive worthily.

The habitual Preparation of constant pious Living, of a constant well-order'd Conversation, is greatly to be desir'd; but an actual Preparation must never be omitted, tho' it cannot be always of the same Length and Largeness.

If it shall be asked, How we must direct our Preparation? Leaving others to the good Methods they have been us'd to, my Answer will be, That they who direct themselves by the Answer to the last Question in our Church Catechism; by the Exhortations which the Minister reads, when he invites to the Sacrament; by the Excellent Discourse

course in the 3d Chapter of *the Whole Duty of Man* ; frequently meditating upon those Places of Scripture, which concern the Institution and Use of this Blessed Sacrament ; may hope to come with Acceptance to God's Altar, and to receive Benefits from doing so, for which they shall have Reason to praise God for ever.

Such are Hatred of Sin ; which cannot but be more and more promoted, if we make a right Use of that lively Representation of our Saviour's Sufferings, which we are presented with in this Sacrament.

Confirmation of our Faith and Hope, while we seal the Promises of the Gospel.

The Increase of our Love to our God and Saviour ; our Saviour, who is, as it were, crucified before us.

Praises and Thanksgivings, and the best Expressions of Gratitude, which our Hearts, and Tongues, and Lives can offer to the best of Benefactors.

Peace and Good-Will towards Men ; to which the most affecting Examples will excite and inflame them who enter into a serious Consideration of them, while they are remembering our Lord.

Let me further observe, That the oftner the Blessed Sacrament shall be administered and received, the better Proof we shall give of our Readiness to obey our Lord, who plainly requires it ; the better we shall comply with the Example of the Primitive Christians ; the more likely the Impressions of it are to remain upon us, and to be effectual to us.

But that frequent Communion, as well as daily Prayer, may be recommended with the greatest Advantages ; Let me add the Sixth of Archbishop *Sancti* 's Articles, which is, ' That they use their utmost Endeavour, both in their Sermons, and
' by

‘ by private Applications, to prevail with such of
 ‘ their Flock, as are of competent Age, to receive
 ‘ frequently the Holy Communion. And to this
 ‘ End, that they Administer it in the greater
 ‘ Towns once in every Month ; and even in the
 ‘ lesser too, if Communicants may be procured.
 ‘ And that they take all due Care, both by Preach-
 ‘ ing, and otherwise, to prepare all for the Wor-
 ‘ thy Receiving of it. I refer those, who need
 further Satisfaction, to the Right Learned and
 Worthy Bishop *Beveridge*’s Discourse about it,
 which follows the other already mentioned.
 There, if Scripture and Reason, the Authority of
 our Lord, the Examples of the Church of the
Jews, and of the Primitive Christians; if fair
 and just Answers to Pretences and Objections can
 prevail, they can hardly fail to satisfy themselves
 abundantly.

P R O P O S A L X V I .

THAT Care may be taken to make People
 more generally sensible, how much it is
 their Duty, and how much it will be their Hap-
 piness, to serve God, as in publick, so in private ;
 in their Closets, in their Families ; particularly to
 have constant Prayers, with reading the Holy
 Scripture there.

Towards effecting this, nothing is more likely,
 by the Blessing of God, to be successful, than the
 Example of the said Chief Gentleman and Gentle-
 men, and of the Minister, together with suitable
 Sermons, and more private Exhortations from
 him : And lastly, the disposing of proper
 Books ; such as Dr. *Gibson*, the present Bishop of
Lincoln, his *Family Devotion* ; Dr. *Mapletoft*’s
 short Discourse of Prayer, after his *Principles and*
Duties

Duties of Christian Religion; The Common Prayer-Book the best Companion; as also the Word of God the best Guide: Both by the same Author; the latter being a Collection of Scripture Texts, plainly shewing such things as are necessary for every Christian's Knowledge and Practice.

I must not forget the *Morning and Evening Prayer for Families, and for Private Persons, &c.* Recommended as proper to be bound up with *Bishop Beveridge's Necessity and Advantage of Publick Prayer: At the End of which, is an Alphabetical Table of the Weekly Collects in the Book of Common Prayer, reduced under proper Heads; out of which, Choice may be easily made, as our Occasions, and Needs, and those of the Church and Kingdom, and the Changes of our Condition, or that of others, may direct.*

PROPOSAL XVII.

IS diligent Visiting the Sick; which is a Duty no Christian will neglect, who seriously considers that which will be said by our Lord, when he comes to judge the World; *I was sick, and ye visited me; and again, I was sick, and ye visited me not; and what the Consequence of performing or neglecting this Duty will be; as also that St. James describes pure Religion and undefiled before God and the Father, in the first place, by visiting the Fatherless and the Widow in their Affliction.*

But beyond others, Clergymen will look upon Visiting the Sick, as an eminent Part of that Care of Souls which they have undertaken, and in the Discharge of which they have more than ordinary Opportunities of doing good in a Season when People are most likely to hearken to them.

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They will remember what they have promised at their Ordination, as well with respect to the Sick, as the Whole, within their Cures; and what the 67th of the before-mentioned Canons enjoins, and the Rubricks in the Order for the Visitation of the Sick.

Nor will they among our Parishioners, who are duly sensible of the Consequences of Death, and of the Eternal Happiness, or the Eternal Misery of Immortal Souls, be unwilling to be directed and assisted in pursuing their Journey towards their long Home, by the last Offices to be done for dying Christians: But rather earnestly desire, and thankfully receive, the pious and charitable Endeavours, which good Christians, and especially their own Ministers, shall offer to them.

PROPOSAL XVIII.

THAT to prevent Idleness, and the many, too well known, bad Effects of it; such as Tale-bearing, Thieving, Haunting Alehouses; whence frequent Drunkenness, Cursing and Swearing, Quarrelling, and shameful Wantonness; some agreeable Manufacture may be set up, if not in all, yet in the larger Parishes. Which may be fittest to be chosen amidst the great Variety of Manufactures, must be determined by Persons of Judgment and Experience; who shall have consider'd what each Place, where their Advice is desired, wants; and what it affords for the present, or may be capable of affording, toward setting those on Work, who need Employment, whether in respect to Food, Cloathing, Building, or Furniture: In short, with regard to the Necessaries, Conveniences, and commendable Ornaments of Human Life.

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PROPOSAL XIX.

THAT Parochial Libraries may be more plentifully erected, especially in Market, and other Large Towns; to be furnish'd with such Books as may be useful to the Ministers, where smaller Livings will not allow them to make sufficient Provision at their own Charge; and in which all ingenuous Persons may have a suitable Diversion at their Leisure Hours, and the Means of Improvement in useful Knowledge and Piety.

As to Books that may be fit to direct in Furnishing the Parochial Library, see *Bibliotheca Parochialis*, Part I. by Dr. Bray; 4to. Lond. 1692. Whether a Second Part has not since been printed, Enquiry must be made.

See also, *An Essay towards Promoting all Necessary and Useful Knowledge, both Human and Divine*; by the same worthy Author. 4to. Lond. 1697.

In which small Treatise, are Proposals to the Gentry and Clergy of this Kingdom, for Purchasing Lending Libraries in all the Deaneries in England, &c. and then a Catalogue of Books; both very fit to be perused.

There is a Book called, *The Student's Library, or a Choice Collection of Books in all Faculties and Parts of Learning*, &c. 4to. Lond. 1713. which it may be useful to consult.

If I add *Bibliotheca Heinsiana*, 8vo. *Censura celebriorum Authorum*, by Sir Thomas Pope Blount, Bart. Fol. Lond. 1690. and for the Use of Divines more particularly, *Apparatus ad Theologiam, in Usum Academicorum*, by Mr. Fenton, 8vo.

Lond. 1688. and Dr. Cave's *Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Historia Literaria*, in Two Volumes Fol. the Parochial Library may, I hope, with the Assistance of some of the more eminent Auction-Catalogues, be in Time competently furnish'd, by a suitable Collection out of them.

PROPOSAL XX.

THAT a good Correspondence between the Gentlemen and the Clergy of the same Neighbourhood (especially of such as own a Relish for Methods of Promoting the Publick Good, on this Foundation of Parochial Improvement) may be endeavour'd, in the best Ways that can be thought of, or directed.

Hereby Proposals may be made, Designs conveniently communicated, set on foot and encourag'd, as oft as there shall be Occasion, in a reputable manner, by Countenance from Names of Merit, and with Hopes of Success from the favourable Assistance of more, who influence Hearts, and command Hands: Especially when any Thing is propos'd, which recommends it self by its apparent Tendency to the Good of a Parish, of the Places where Peoples chief Interests are known to be, and of the Publick.

PROPOSAL XXI. and Last.

THAT there may be frequent Conferences of the Clergy, who are at no great Distance from one another; whether at their own Houses, or at other convenient Places, where they may consult and debate upon such Matters, as may be proper to promote more especially the Spiritual
and

and Religious Interests of their several Parishes with Freedom.

The Advantages of this Course are sufficient Reason for and Encouragements to it. Hereby we shall have the Benefit of mutual Notices, Directions and Assistances, as our own, or our Parishioners Condition may require. Hereby it will be known by what Abilities we are capable of being helpful to one another, or serviceable to the Church, and to our native Country. Hereby, to the great Advancement of our Studies, we shall be made acquainted where many Books are to be had, whether in Print or Manuscript, which we may be unfurnish'd with. Hereby we may be enabled much better than when left to our selves, to master the Difficulties of our Studies; to answer the Scruples, and to resolve the Doubts of our People. Hereby we may meet with the Knowledge of more successful Expedients in the Management of our Domestick or Parochial, especially our Ministerial Affairs, than yet we have had Experience of.

This is what I have at present to offer, without any other Design than that of promoting God's Glory, and the Publick Good of Church and State, which seem to suffer in many Places, by the visible Neglect of Parochial Government.

Nor can I fear or think that these short Notices of our Duty will meet with Discouragement from any, who make Profession of Christianity, particularly in the way of the Church of *England*, or of Affection to their Country.

Their Graces and their Lordships the Archbishops and Bishops of this Church, will delight to do their best to make that effectual, which others only can propose; they will use the Interest
they

they have in His Majesty, in the Parliament, in the Convocation, in the Clergy singly consider'd, by reason of their Dependance upon them, and the legal Obligations they are under to their Lordships, to promote Parochial Government, and thereby the Increase of Christian Knowledge; and such Reformation of Manners, as will be the Glory of the Age they live in, and secure the Happiness of it upon the firmest Foundations, as well as to themselves Comforts not to be express'd, when the chief Shepherd shall appear, and bestow that Crown of Glory which fadeth not away.

All who are in Authority, whether Ecclesiastical or Civil, will see Reason to rejoice in any proper Method (and 'tis hop'd this is such) of promoting a Government that directly tends towards leading a quiet and peaceable Life in all Godliness and Honesty.

The Right Honourable Judges of the Realm will be glad to receive from the ancient and honourable Bench of Justices of the Peace, at the Return of the Assizes twice in a Year, an Account of the happy Estate of their several Counties and Districts.

Nor will it be a small Pleasure to both Judges and Justices, to find their Work much less, and much less troublesome: That there will be fewer on whom to place the Marks of Infamy; fewer to be cut off by the Sword of Justice; more for them to praise and reward for doing well.

In general, the Honourable, the Great, the High, the Patrons of Churches, and the Supports of Parishes and larger Societies, while they consider their true Interest, will be glad, by encouraging this Attempt, to gain themselves a Title to that most gracious Promise, *1 Sam. 2. 30. Them that honour me, I will honour.* What

What Husbands and Wives, who are worthy of the Honour of those Names, will not count it a great Part of the Happiness of their Lives, to see their Children *trained up in the way they shou'd go*; that is, in the way of Knowledge, Sobriety, Justice, Charity and Piety?

Good Masters of Families cannot but think it a more than ordinary Blessing, to have a Part in the Holy Patriarch *Abraham's* Character and Commendation; That of commanding his Children, and his Household after him, so as that they should keep the Way of the Lord, to do Judgment and Justice.

As to Masters and Servants, nothing is more likely than good Family and Parochial Government, to give the Former reason to say of the Latter, as *Laban* did of *Jacob*, *I have learned by Experience, that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake*, Gen. 30. 27. And what can be more a Satisfaction to a good Master, than to be able to say this? Or to a good and faithful Servant, whether Living or Dying, than to have this said of him?

As to my Brethren of the Parochial Clergy, while I make Proposals, and excite to that which many of them already carefully practise; at the same Time I approve and commend them. They who for the Time past have been less mindful of their Duty, will not, I hope, scruple to join in Endeavours, to make themselves and their Parishioners more easy, and happy for the future; or take it ill, that any of us consider one another to provoke to Love and to good Works; more especially in a Season, when it will become us of the Clergy more abundantly to exert our selves; and to shew what, by the Rules we are under, the Constitutions of our excellent Church, we are capable of doing, in Opposition to the Designs of
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those many Adversaries, who watch for our Halting, and will rejoice in our Falls; as well as in Answer to the just Expectations of those, who behold the Transgressors, and are grieved for what they see, and what they fear, and what they cannot remedy.

As to sober Dissenters, who prefer the Welfare of *Christendom*, and the Good of their Countrey, before the little narrow Interests of any Palty, (and such I believe there are) it may reasonably be thought, that they will look upon the Practice of such Parochial Government, as one of the best Methods of inviting them to be united with us; which is the sincere and earnest Desire of all peaceable and pious Clergymen and Christians; of all who have the publick Welfare at their Hearts.

In short, there is not any Sort of Persons, Whether High or Low, Rich or Poor, Young or Old, who may not see Reason to hope Advantages from good Parochial Government: For it will certainly by the Blessing of God, not only advance our Temporal Interests, but those which are infinitely more valuable; as promoting that true Religion, which renews the Image of God in the Souls of Men; that Godliness, which, as it is profitable unto all Things, so to all Sorts of pious Persons, having the Promise of the Life that now is, and of that which is to come: In which the Rewards of all that persevere in doing good, and in encouraging them that do it, shall be Glorious and Eternal.

F I N I S.



